

**JUSTICE COMMITTEE MEETING
Macon County Office Building
Macon County Board Room #514
141 S. Main Street, Decatur, IL 62523**

April 27, 2023 @ 3:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Greg Mattingley – Chair
Debra Kraft
Andrew Hogan
Bill Oliver

MEMBERS ABSENT

Grant Noland

COUNTY PERSONNEL PRESENT

Judge Griffith, Courts
Sherry Doty, Circuit Clerk
Jon Perona, PBC
Michelle Sanders, Public Defender
Sheriff Root
Carol Reed, Auditor
Pat Berter, Probation
Scott Reuter, State’s Attorney
Sheriff Jedlicka
Tamara Wilcox, County Administrator
Tammy Schneider, EMA
Michael Baggett, State’s Attorney
Crystal Hugger, County Board

The meeting was called to order by Chair Mattingley @ 3:00 p.m. at the Macon County Office Building.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING

Ms. Kraft made a motion to approve the minutes from (03/23/2023), seconded by Mr. Hogan and the motion carried 4-0.

CLAIMS

Mr. Oliver made a motion to approve claims, seconded by Ms. Kraft. Motion carried 4-0.

REPORTS

Circuit Clerk-

Ms. Doty reported that they have been busy with a new program the Supreme Court wants to come out and it is costing the County money, but Supreme Court thinks we are rich. What I handed out was what the Sixth Judicial Counties in our district pay their jurors. I did the information when talking with Judge Griffith and we came up with an idea to increase it. They have been paid \$10 dollars since 1982 and the only time it was increased is when the Supreme Court asked us to increase to \$25 dollars per day. For the first day \$50 dollars per day and they repelled it and found it unconstitutional because nobody could afford that. It lasted for 15 months after doing some research. After very many conversations with Judge Griffith he would like to increase it to \$20 dollars per day and .30 cent per mile. The reason being the gas prices and I would have to ask for \$36,000 more dollars due to the fact I only budgeted for \$10 dollars. Now

we are going to 7 months doesn't mean I will use all of that, but I must have it in my budget and my general fund budget to be able to afford it. As you know and the Attorney's know the only thing, I can charge for jury is on civil cases. It is \$112.50 for 12 men of course traffic and criminal it is their right so there is no charge for a jury trial. Right now, I believe Mr. Greenfield is working on my price of parking downtown. The city charges me \$4800 dollars a year and Mike got it down during COVID due to the fact we only used it one time and they were still charging us, and we got it down to \$2400. We don't charge them anything, so they are trying to work out a deal with them to try to get that down. The only thing that I have coming out of my jury expenses is my coordinator, who is the best we ever had. Judge would be lost without Chelsey, and I would be lost without Chelsey. We must pay for meals every so often, not all the time. We don't have long trials except when they throw us a murder trial or a civil trial that may last two weeks, and we do have two of those coming up. I am asking you guys to increase my general fund budget to \$36,000 dollars.

Judge Griffith said that he is the one that came up with the juror pay and there is nothing magical to them. I just looked in our figures and other counties figures and try to come up with some compromised numbers that represents an increase. If someone thinks they're wrong or has some better idea I certainly will not have my feelings hurt. The other thing I think that needs to be considered is in terms of bringing jurors in lately unless we get busy doing trials it has been about two days a month which is quite a decrease in terms of what it has been in the past.

Ms. Kraft made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Oliver. Motion carried 4-0.

Circuit Court- No Report

Coroner- No Report

Court Services / Probation –

Mr. Berter reported that they have received a notice of certification for our tracker case management system for the State of Illinois (AOIC). The total cost was about \$20,000 dollars. That is for our probation information, pretrial information, and problem-solving court information. The next step would be to have training with staff and then we will have to go back through all our cases that are active and enter the information that is missing. I am hoping that it will probably only take a couple of days, but we will do some things internally to get that taken care of. They are going to reimburse us for the whole \$20,000 dollars. This won't cost us anything for the County. I appreciate everything the Sheriff department has been doing as far as transporting the kids to different detention facility. Monday, we had two individuals in McLean and today again we have another individual in McLean County. We are in a situation where we have 5 kids currently in Peoria County, that is what the contract calls for and they are not willing to take it anymore because of staffing issues. We just continue to look at other places and every time that we had a kid that we needed to take some where the Sheriff department always step up and take care of us. I really appreciate it.

Emergency Management Agency-

Ms. Schneider reported that they are rolling along on their preparedness campaign working with going out to business and various groups and giving preparedness talks, talking about severe weather safety and things of that nature. We are in the middle of our hazard mitigation plan update. Those of you who have received this survey I would like to thank you for pushing it out further. If you have not taken the survey, please do so it gives good feedback to our vendor as to what the picture looks like for Macon County on our preparedness and what people perceive our hazard and preparedness level to be. I am going to turn it over from this point to Tammy regarding the resolution that we have on the table.

Ms. Wilcox reported that she is taking the resolution because Tammy did not ask for this increase. What this resolution is asking for is an increase of \$10,000 dollars to the previously awarded amount of \$22,000 dollars of ARPA funds and the increase if for a drone. In one of the training courses, I was at with EMA I got to talk to a drone pilot from Logan County and everything they have done with their drone. The biggest downfall was the drone we were looking at getting that he has does not fly in bad weather. If this is going to be under EMA, it is probably not going to be sunny when we want to fly the drone. Tammy did a good job of getting some estimates.

Ms. Schneider said that Detective Woods from the Sheriff's office got the estimate for me.

Ms. Wilcox said that he said if you got the funds I would upgrade. It was amazing to listen to him and how much they had done with their drone. This drone will be shared with the EMA and the Sheriff's department.

Ms. Schneider said that we are also going to do some work with County Highway to do documentation of new infrastructure on the bridges and culverts that we have done new over the past 4-5 years. That is a lot of investment and infrastructure and if we have a substantial disaster that damages any of us having photo documentation of what it looks like before goes a long way towards getting some sort of reimbursement. On the other side of that instead of them saying well what it looks like before had you let it go if it needs a repair or replacement anyway, we can use that as drill time for practice on using the drone but also as documentation and using it for something useful for the County as well.

Mr. Oliver asked where it would be stored.

Ms. Schneider said it will be stored at EMA. It will be an asset that is available to the Sheriff's office which we will have a train pilot with EMA and 1-2 train pilot with the Sheriff's office. It will be an asset available to both of those entities who will use it extensively if another agency were to have a need that the drone could fulfil then we could deploy a pilot either from the EMA office or from the Sheriff's office along with the drone. It could be a good asset all around for the County it is not going to be limited use for just those two agencies we can use for other things.

Ms. Kraft asked will it be used if there is storm damage.

Ms. Schneider said yes, that is what Logan County just did with these previous storms just a few weeks ago.

Ms. Kraft made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Oliver. Motion carried 4-0.

Public Building Commission- No Report

Public Defender-

Ms. Sander reported that they did hire someone who has started back with them. He has been with us before, and he has come back. He started with us a couple of weeks ago, so we are up to 7 of 10 on employment. I do have an offer excepted from somebody else to start in late July who is an experienced trial attorney. That will help us a lot if she ends up joining us. Similar issues to what Mr. Reuter raised a couple of weeks ago, since we are hiring new people, my temp position is gone. Just to get someone hired in the cost of attorneys has gone up dramatically. I am doing everything that I can to keep within budget and hiring people is an expense and I must lift to be in that same kind of range, and it is difficult.

There is currently legislation right now and I know that a portion of my salary is paid by the State and a portion is paid by the County. There is legislation pending right now that it would all be State paid. I have been monitoring that. If I hear anything about that I will let everybody know.

Sheriff-

The Sheriff reported that the gentleman sitting next to him was Matthew Jedlicka. He was promoted as my Chief Deputy as of April the 8th. I am looking for a long prosperous career with him. He comes from 20 years of law enforcement and came from our Detective Bureau, and we are happy to have him and get him trained up and ready to go. Kris Thompson will officially retire on May 1st, and he will move on to a brighter future for himself. Right now, we have 281 inmates in the Macon County jail. Of those 13 of them are Champaign County, 37 of them are FEDs, 3 Unfits, and I have 8 people that are serving sentences. I have 4 people ready to go to DOC which they have been a good flow of getting them out of our facility whenever we need to. About every week we make a run to the corrections intake and drop them off.

Macon County Board Resolution Approving Permission to Dispose of Damaged Firearm
Sheriff Root reported that this was a firearm that was damaged 8 years ago. We have it in our inventory, and we need to dispose of it.

Mr. Oliver made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Hogan. Motion carried 4-0.

Macon County Board Resolution Approving Permission to Dispose of Surplus Equipment

Sheriff Root reported that this consist of 12 radios and are jail radios that are low dollar items. It is easier to replace them than to fix them. There are 12 of those and we have two AED's that are end of life that we have had to replace, and we need to dispose of those.

Chair Mattingley asked are these at this stage toss and somebody else use.

Sheriff Root said we recycle and take back up to the radio vendor, and they will strip any parts of it and they will send it through recycling.

Ms. Kraft made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Oliver. Motion carried 4-0.

***Macon County Board Resolution Approving the Purchase of a Replacement Vehicle
And Related Equipment for EMA***

Sheriff Root reported that because of some storms the vehicle that Tammy was previously driving was a 2013 Tahoe. It got damaged when a tree fell on it and the insurance company gave us \$20,342.00. We are going to need an additional amount of money to cover the rest of the vehicle because it is a \$42,747.00 vehicle. We will need approximately \$5000 dollars for equipment once we outfit it for lights and things that must be in there. This is all coming out of the Law Enforcement Safety tax of the additional money.

Mr. Hogan made a motion to approve, seconded by Ms. Kraft. Motion carried 4-0.

Mr. Oliver asked a question about what kind of equipment.

Sheriff Root said that the Emergency Management Vehicle will get just lights and sirens. That is all they get with the center console. Some of that will transfer from the old one and the things that don't we will have to buy new. It doesn't get caged for transport or anything of that nature.

Ms. Schneider said that the siren and stuff is still good allegedly. We obtained permission from the insurance company to pull emergency lighting and the radios. The radios had water dripping on them however, Clear Talk which is our radio vendor was going to evaluate them and if they need repair, we are going to have them refurbished which can cost up to \$1500 dollars as opposed to replacement of the radios which is about \$10,000 dollars. Carol worked with me to get permission from the insurance company to take the radios. The vendors would have had to come out and deactivate the radios because they had the police channels on them and to take the emergency lights. We will use what we can. It is a different model year on the vehicle so not everything will translate but we do have other vehicles it might can be used on and it will be stored out at County Highway.

Discussion on Opiate Settlement Request

Sheriff Root reported I know that we were waiting on the States Attorney's office to do some research for us. Heritage wanted to meet with me to see about maybe partner with us. I am almost positive that we can use that money in the jail if it is allowed. We had at least one person that is requested to go on the injections, and we denied that request because we weren't sure who was paying for it. It is \$1600 dollars for that injection. If we can get this money, we might be able to get more people on this medication before they get out of jail.

Mr. Baggett said in terms of new information on how we can use this money. The information that I received from our settlement attorneys who have worked closely with the Attorney General who is kind of in charge of how the State's portion of the settlement is being allocated and regulated. If we are using them toward opioid mitigation in some way shape or form, that is going to satisfy our reporting obligation to the AG's office. What the Sheriff is proposing I think would fall very much in line with that as well as the proposal from Crossing and Heritage. It is just a matter of somebody developing the program. It is not going to be giving all the money to Heritage and Crossing. The way that the city did that is fine we just need to figure out exactly how to divide the money up and distribute it to the people who are going to be using it. Beyond that we will just have a reporting

obligation quarterly we will have to report to the State on how we used the money in the last three months.

Chair Mattingley said part of which we would obviously know because Heritage and Crossing would be reporting how they have used it.

Sheriff Root replied that is why we want to sit down with them and see if it is easier to do that and enter into an agreement to where they do the treatment and they do the reporting.

Mr. Baggett said and that is the thing the reporting is really telling them how we spent the money. If we give the money to Heritage and Crossing pursuant to an agreement that they use it for opioid mitigation. We report one time when we gave the money the first time. It is not an ongoing report. We are going to spend that money instantly and we report that one spends and show the back up for what the obligations are and what the proposal was from Crossing and Heritage on how they were going to use the money. Beyond that we don't have an ongoing reporting obligation, so we don't have to monitor and keep tabs on what they are doing and how they are using the money. That is going to make it as easy as possible for us. If we can figure out a way to use it directly at the jail that makes it easier.

Sheriff Root said I am open for conversation with them, and we will see what they want to do. If they just want us to hand over the money and not come and provide the service in our jail, then it is not going to benefit us.

Mr. Baggett replied if that is what they are wanting to do that is fine we can divide the money up and give it to the Sheriff to use in the jail than they can have maybe what is left over. I think it is in their interest to meet us more than halfway on that.

State's Attorney-

Mr. Reuter reported that whatever is happening with our economy and people being available for the job market is affecting everything. I am losing a couple of very good support staff people to jobs for State Farm where they are going to earn \$20,000 dollars a year more than what I can pay them as support staff. That also goes to investigator we recently had an investigator retire and we found an appropriate replacement and had a couple of people both ultimately said that they are not coming are way because primarily financial issues of what I can pay. One of them I had hired and where he was found that out and have now offered him another \$7000 more than I was offering for him to stay there. I don't blame them anytime someone can improve their conditions. I don't have a problem with that, but it is getting to be a regular problem with any type of employee not just attorneys. The other thing is some of my observations have been confirmed lately by some studies and questioners that are being done. There are less people going to law school. What happened apparently a few years back that the law schools tightened up their requirements for people being admitted? As I understand it those requirements are being relaxed to kind of compensate for the number of people that aren't being graduated from law schools to fill those jobs that are being left by retiring attorneys. However, that is a few years off now before that flow adds up, they are saying in about 5 years. The bar results for people who take the bar after going into law school and pass are much worse than they were. You have got less people who are being able to pass the bar to become attorneys so these are all difficulties that are giving Michelle and I and I will reiterate it is not just us it is not just our County. The County throughout the State are having

difficulties getting competent people to be an Assistant State's Attorneys and that of course drives the price up for those that might be available in that market.

Ms. Sander replied that our passage rates this time are 40% less in many areas. It used to be 80's and 90's.

Mr. Reuter said the other thing is that it has come to my attention that some people have been asking some questions and some people may have noted that we are now filing some violations in petty traffic cases. If people don't pay their court costs on time typically, we have been referring those to collections. We had a discussion within our office and what we have noted is a disturbing pattern and I will have to get back and say my peace with Chief Brandel because apparently, he was on Brian Beyers this week complaining about lack traffic enforcement. It is not uncommon for us to offer supervision in petty traffic cases like speeding or anything like that which is normal. We access court cost, and we move on and typically what has been happening is if people don't pay, they get referred to collections.

The problem that we have been finding is that people are taking advantage of that, and they are getting a pass with supervision and getting the benefits of supervision and then never paying it. Collections than would have to keep up with them and we have had enough of that. What we are doing and what we have thought of initially is if you are wanting supervision, you must pay all the money up front but after reviewing it and I decided let's do this if we are going to give supervision. A lot of our people are ordinary average citizens and when they get supervision, they are going to be able to pay it off right away. There are a fair number of people who have just been taking advantage of the system of getting the benefit of not having a conviction on their record and not ever paying the money. We are requiring that if you're going to get supervision you have to pay half the money up front and many more cases now if they don't pay it we are going to be looking to revoke their supervision so they don't get the benefit of that because they didn't pay a dime. One of those is important for the County Board because that is a source of revenue. If anybody has a problem with that, they can talk to me about it.

Old Business - None

New Business - None

Public Comment- None

Closed Session – None needed.

Adjournment-The meeting was adjourned by Chair Mattingley @ 3:45 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Crystal Hugger, Executive Secretary, Macon County Board Office